IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A polyelectrolyte comprising at least one cationic terpolymer prepared by polymerization of a monomer composition consisting of (i) (meth)acrylamide;

(ii) ~~dimethylaminopropyl acrylamide quaternized with a C_1 to C_3 alkyl or alkylene group or a benzyl group~~ trimethyl ammonium propyl acrylamide; and

(iii) a quaternized dialkylamino alkyl(meth)acrylate selected from the group consisting of trimethyl ammonium methyl (meth)acrylate, triethyl ammonium methyl (meth)acrylate, trimethyl ammonium ethyl (meth)acrylate, triethyl ammonium ethyl (meth)acrylate, trimethyl ammoniumpropyl (meth)acrylate and triethyl ammonium propyl ~~(meth) acrylate~~ (meth)acrylate;

the composition of the polyelectrolyte having a toxicity index

$Fi = (Q_{TP} - 2Q_{ME})/10 \leq 1$

where

Q_{TP} = total cationic charge of the polymer,

Q_{ME} = charge proportion of an ester-type monomer.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): A polyelectrolyte according to claim 1, wherein the polyelectrolyte has a total charge of 1 to 99 mol%.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): A polyelectrolyte according to claim 1, wherein the polymer has a solution viscosity of 10 to 2000 mPas.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): A polyelectrolyte according to claim 1, wherein the quaternized dialkylamino alkyl(meth)acrylate is 3-dimethylammoniumpropyl(meth)acrylamide quaternized with methyl chloride (DIMAPA-Quat).

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): A polyelectrolyte according to claim 1, wherein the quaternized dialkylamino alkyl (meth)acrylate is 2-dimethylamino (meth)acrylate quaternized with methyl chloride (ADAME-Quat).

Claims 6-7 (Canceled).

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): A polyelectrolyte according to claim 1, wherein the polymer is synthesized by a gel polymerization method.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): A polyelectrolyte according to claim 1, wherein the polymer is synthesized by an emulsion polymerization method.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): A polyelectrolyte according to claim 1, wherein the polymer is synthesized by a suspension polymerization method.

Claim 11 (Withdrawn): A method for dewatering sewage sludge comprising utilizing the polyelectrolyte claimed in claim 1.

Claim 12 (Withdrawn): A method for purification of waste water or conditioning of potable water comprising purifying waste water or conditioning potable water with the polyelectrolyte as claimed in claim 1.

Claim 13 (Withdrawn): A method for manufacture of paper or cardboard comprising manufacturing paper or cardboard with the polyelectrolyte as claimed in claim 1.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): A water-in-water polymer dispersion, comprising a polyelectrolyte according to claim 1.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): A polyelectrolyte according to claim 1, wherein the polyelectrolyte contains 0.1-20 wt.% of a highly cationic, low molecular weight polymer, based on the total composition of the polyelectrolyte.